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This is an electronic version of an article published in:

The article is officially available online at:
http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/content~content=a789967405~db=all~jumptype=rss (institutional or subscribed access may be required)

The journal Mobilities is available online:
http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/content~content=a789967405~db=all~order=page (institutional or subscribed access may be required)

doi: 10.1080/17450100701797323

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Mutant Mobilities: Backpacker Tourism in ‘Global’ Sydney

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Abstract
This essay explores the complex mobilities of contemporary backpackers. Backpackers are not just tourists; they are also frequently students, working holidaymakers, highly skilled professional workers, and even, at times, long-term semi-permanent residents. How to define this group of physically and conceptually mobile travellers is often problematic, especially for local authorities. It is difficult to discern what cultural space and identity this type of mobility and this category of traveller occupy. Focusing on the tensions in residential communities which have developed as a result of backpackers not only travelling through but frequently dwelling in place, the essay analyses the ‘backpacker phenomenon’ as a complex and mutating mix of working, holiday and residential experiences that needs to be understood within a framework of increasing(ly) uneven, diverse and contested mobilities.

Keywords: Mobility, place, urban culture, backpackers, working holidaymakers, ‘global’ Sydney, cultural politics of occupancy

Introduction
Images of mobility are increasingly commonplace. They have become ordinary reminders of a world ever more densely stitched together through both technological systems of communication and transportation. Such interconnections include the disparate, informal pathways established through migration and the extended networks of transnational communities. But they also encompass the precarious routes of refugees, asylum seekers and guest workers. Multiple interacting systems and networks of mobility are appearing, and groups as diverse as backpackers and students, migrants and cosmopolitan professionals are more likely than ever to merge and intersect in various ways, shaping, changing and impacting on ‘local’ communities.

The technologies supporting this compression of time and space between people and places are now familiar to many, and have become part of the very fabric of social life: the internet, mobile phones, new information systems and transportation networks, air travel and so on. They are indispensable to a contemporary form of being-in-the-world lived more and more ‘on the move’. While such innovations have made it possible to communicate at ever faster speeds across greater distances, and have led to the possibility of near instantaneous transfers of money, images and ideas, they also influence and support the actual physical movements of people around the world. Over 700 million trips across international borders are made each year, a figure that is
predicted to increase rapidly to more than 1 billion in the near future. \(^1\) Currently, there are also around 31 million refugees and 100 million international migrants worldwide (Urry, 2003, p. 61). In the 21st century, labour flows around the world have become one of the most archetypal forms of contemporary mobility. In the context of migration and global labour markets, however, while people have always moved in search of jobs and employment opportunities, the ways in which they move have changed radically. There has been a paradigmatic shift in global international migration patterns away from permanent migration and settlement towards the non-permanent, temporary movements of people across multiple destinations.

It is international travel, however, that constitutes the largest movement of people that has ever been recorded, accounting for over one-twelfth of the value of world trade. Tourism and travel are now among the largest industries in the world, and virtually nowhere is untouched by their reach. Places have become significant as both arrival and departure points for international visitors, and consequently, the World Tourism Organisation publishes travel statistics for around 220 countries. The political economy of transportation, together with increasingly disposable incomes, have obviously played a crucial role in the emergence of travel and tourism on such a massive scale. The deregulated airline industry, for example, has made cheap flights available to more and more people and, at the same time, has contributed to an expansion and diversification in the number and type of places able to be visited.

While the effects and consequences of such changes at the level of the transportation industry have yet to be fully explored, it is also clear that the range and diversity of the mobilities associated with such changes have not received the attention they deserve. In Europe, for example, the increase in budget airlines has not only been associated with an increase in tourism generally, but also with the rise of numerous niches: regional sport tourism (including, the incidences of football violence and hooliganism), ‘dark tour’ circuits such as to Auschwitz and the London Dungeon (and, in New York, to ‘Ground Zero’), pre-wedding ‘hens’ nights’ and ‘bucks’ parties’ in cheap destinations in Eastern Europe, inter-regional pub crawls and drinking tours, and short ‘mini-breaks’, to name just a few examples. Other forms of short-term, temporary mobility include ‘diaspora tourism’ (Coles & Timothy, 2004) and ‘medical tourism’ which includes combining surgery and holiday or short-term, overseas medical work by health care workers. The list that some researchers have compiled extends to so-called ‘xenotourism’ in the medical sciences, ‘reproductive’ and ‘birthright’ tourism, which refer to travel, respectively, in order to obtain medically assisted reproduction, and by expectant mothers to secure the citizenship rights of specific countries for their children, and even includes what has been dubbed ‘benefits’ or ‘welfare tourism’ (Coles et al., 2006).

While there is necessarily a role for charting the spectrum of mutating tourism mobilities, this endlessly expanding typology of terms runs the risk of simply producing a potentially inexhaustible list of infinitely fractured niche tourism markets. As Lofgren argues, this ‘craze for classification’ within much conventional tourism research often represents ‘a tradition of flat-footed sociology and psychology’, and

\(^1\) In 2004, 760 million legal international tourist arrivals were recorded. See www.world-tourism.org/newsroom/Releases/2005/january/2004numbers.htm. This figure is predicted to increase to 1.6 billion in 2020. See www.world-tourism.org/facts/eng/vision.htm
often results in ‘an unhappy marriage between marketing research and positivist ambitions of scientific labelling’ (1999, p. 267). Such caution heeded, the interest in, and proliferation of, such variegated forms of movement across different scales certainly suggests the sheer range and extent of the diverse mobilities that have led some to declare the emergence of a ‘new mobilities paradigm’ (Sheller & Urry, 2006). From this point of view, the significance of these mobilities stems not necessarily from their individual novelty, but from their coordination of new kinds of transnational connections, new warpings of distance and proximity, time and space, and ultimately, from their fashioning of new linkages and relationships between peoples, places and cultures.

In this spirit, our specific aim in this essay is to investigate the practices of mobility associated with the group of international travellers known as backpackers, and the fluidity of this category, focusing especially on those who combine travelling with a working holiday or a residential stay. The working holiday in particular blurs traditional understandings of both the touristic holiday and the everyday world of work and routine to become an unusual kind of residential experience that combines periods of travelling through place with periods of dwelling in place, giving rise to tension within these residential communities. The contemporary backpacker (who is also often an employee, a student, a visitor, a seasonal worker, holidaymaker, a semi-permanent resident, and potentially many other roles and identities) mixes and mutates tourist subcategories as well as types of mobility. In this way, the mobilities of these travellers combine a complex mix of working, holiday and residential experiences that cannot be easily classified within conventional categories of ‘tourist’, ‘migrant’, ‘seasonal worker’ or ‘resident’. In essence, such mobilities can be seen as a contemporary cultural practice that redefines both backpacker (tourist) and residential culture.

Moreover, we wish to link such mobilities with space and identity in order to investigate how spatial relations are constituted and reconfigured through such movements, and how constructions of mobility and location produce and intersect with the contested identities of ‘community’, ‘residence’ and ‘place’. This particular focus on the ‘mutant mobilities’ associated with backpackers is one part of a larger research project on backpacker culture in Sydney. The overall aim of the larger project is to identify and investigate new and changing trends in backpacker tourism. Specifically, the project explores the interactions between this diversifying market segment and a number of residential communities which ‘host’ large numbers of backpackers. These communities include suburbs and neighbourhoods where backpackers and working holiday makers frequently live and reside. The project incorporates a mixed-method approach, including both qualitative and quantitative methods. Data on all the major stakeholder groups (local government, residents and precinct committees, and

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2 It is important to note that rather than offering a totalising, blanket description of the contemporary world, Sheller & Urry's (2006) 'new mobilities paradigm' suggests 'a set of questions, theories, and methodologies'. This is a distinction that we support in this essay.

3 'Backpackers' are not the same as working holiday makers although the terms are often used interchangeably. In Australia, Working Holiday is a visa class (class 417). 'Backpackers' are defined as 'international visitors who spent at least one night in hostel type accommodation' (Bureau of Tourism Research, 1997).
international travellers/backpackers) have been collected through focus groups, interviews and surveys.4

Contemporary mobilities, such as those outlined above, involve new intersections between international travel, migration and tourism. As Coles et al. (2006, pp. 309-310) have argued:

> These forms of mobility do not conform to stereotypical views of vacation or business trips, they challenge existing definitions and established, orthodox conceptualisations of tourism, but their existence, the increased volume of such trips, and their greater visibility are indicative that we live in qualitatively new environments … [T]hese new and growing forms of mobility help to define the contemporary condition, tourism’s role within it, and new sets of outcomes and impacts associated with tourism.

The worldwide trend towards the culturalisation of contemporary cities - the increasing emphasis on ‘creative’ and ‘cultural’ cities - also folds into these new developments in tourism and transportation. Tourism is one of the major sectors targeted by the city marketing ‘industry’, and the strategies used by various ‘cultural entrepreneurs’ to draw attention to new cultural ‘events’ or ‘scenes’ appearing in the contemporary creative city often involve advertising and promotions distributed directly through low-cost or budget airlines. In these instances, restructurings in the global system of capitalism in the forms of a deregulated transportation industry and new urban economies find complex connections with other forms of human movement, all coming together in complementary and intersecting ways to produce what appears as almost exemplary models of a new world order of neoliberal entrepreneurial opportunity and mobility. This new form of ‘Easy Jet tourism’ - to coin yet another new descriptor - has profound effects on the ways in which people travel (enabling spontaneous, short-term, frequent and routine trips), as well as the places drawn into these circuits of circulation. In such cases, it is impossible to separate the wide array of new forms of mobility and tourism from wider technological and economic developments including, of course, transformations in urban development and the cultures of cities.

In countries such as Australia, meanwhile, the extension and intensification of tourism circuits and networks associated with ‘budget travel’ have significantly influenced the itineraries of travellers, and consequently, the place-destinations along these routes. As one travel industry spokesman outlined:

> The ‘travelling up the East Coast’ scenario is not really happening as it did because you get the cheap flight to Ballina or you get the cheap flight to Prosperpine or Hervey Bay or whatever. [Budget travellers] just miss doing the major sort of hub stuff now … they come cashed up, or they’ve got a credit card, or can get one straight away … That idea of experiencing a place has changed. (Marcus Lenarduzzi, Co-Director of the Kings Cross Partnership/Manager, Funkhouse Backpackers, 12 May 2006)

This is not to imply any kind of crude technological or economic determinism. Rather, it is to acknowledge the complex interconnections between human mobilities and the

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4 ‘Backpacker Tourism in Global Sydney’ is an Australian Research Council Linkage Project being conducted in partnership with six municipal councils in Sydney. The authors are the primary researchers engaged on the project. For more information about the project see: www.uws.edu.au/ccr/backpacker
material objects and technologies they rely on and bring together. Travel involves a massive realm of physical objects and infrastructures to facilitate such movements of people on a large scale. The various ‘technologies of mobility’ (Allon, 2000, 2004a, b) that both control and enable travel, from airliners and airports to guidebooks, passports, hostels and hotels, visas and work/migration schemes, casual and seasonal employment prospects, are also a significant part of the material, substantive frameworks in which different types of travel are conducted.

Accounting for these new configurations, therefore, means shifting the focus from static and fixed models of analysis - a particular site, place or individual instance of coming and going - onto the complex intersections between people in motion and the contexts determining how and why they (do or don’t) travel. The challenge is to change the object of inquiry from fixed to mobile and, in so doing, to widen the range of concepts, theories and methodologies for research. This is the oft-heard call for interdisciplinary research, of course. In the context of tourism, in particular, the need to integrate multi- and interdisciplinary approaches in analyses of contemporary mobility is more than clear, it is actually essential. As Graburn & Jafari argue: ‘no single discipline alone can accommodate, treat or understand tourism; it can be studied only if disciplinary boundaries are crossed and multidisciplinary perspectives are sought and formed (1991, pp. 7-8). And at the heart of this is the definition of the ‘tourist’, which has remained constant despite the multidimensional social and technological changes of recent decades.

Moreover, in the current era of globalisation, the lives of those crossing international borders - whether it be for work and economic opportunity, travel and leisure, or safety and security - are interrelated, juxtaposed and positioned relationally, at multiple levels. There is not just the obvious connection between ‘voluntary’ and ‘involuntary’ forms of movement, or between those who move freely across borders and those who get ‘stuck’ in situations of forced immobility, but the whole host of power variables structuring how mobility gets ascribed to some bodies and not others, as well as the wider infrastructures determining the interrelationships between figures such as the tourist, backpacker, business traveller, migrant, student, seasonal worker, asylum seeker and refugee.

This emphasis on relational mobility thus supports a theoretical approach that goes beyond the conceptualisation of places and sites as discrete or bounded localities or as spatially distinct ‘containers’ of social life. Similarly, this is to move away from an understanding of place as simply a terrain impacted by tourism or as a ‘scale’ unto itself - typically conceived as only ever ‘local’. Indeed, after Doreen Massey’s call to think space relationally and to inquire into how social and spatial relations are ‘mutable ongoing productions’ (2004, p. 5), this is to question the entire scalar logic implied by the local/global couplet complete with its tendency to pit the discretely ‘local’ against the diffusely ‘global’. Thus, our intention is to hold in critical tension the multiple scales constituting spaces (see e.g. Anderson & Taylor, 2005), while at the same time being mindful of the problematic nature of the very notion of geographical scale itself (Marston et al, 2005). This leads to an understanding of space less as a receptacle into which objects are placed, or in which social processes unfold, than as a configuration which actually emerges from the relationships between objects and processes. So, rather than treating place as a given site or a container within which
vectors of mobility or geographical scales simply intersect, this shift allows a conceptualisation of space as constitutive of forms of movement, and as actively shaping new and novel proximities (and tensions) between different bodies and groups.

Finally, one of the key areas of interest in this essay is the way in which the identity of the group of travellers known as backpackers intersects with and is positioned vis-à-vis other mobile and not-so-mobile groups; furthermore, how their practices of travelling generate conflicts and problems within the relatively fixed entities known in Australian cities as LGAs (local government areas). This serves to highlight the ‘spatialities of mobility’, and supports an analysis of human movement as socially specific and unequally distributed (Cresswell, 1999; see also Massey, 1994).

**Backpacking Tourism: Connectivities Across Mobilities**

In this essay we take up Appadurai’s observation that ‘it is things-in-motion that illumine their human and social context’ (Appadurai, 1988, p. 5). As a result, we focus on a specific group of people in motion in order to explore the wider cultural, social and economic contexts of global mobility in which they are embedded. Using the case of Sydney, Australia, we draw from our project on urban backpacker tourism to illuminate the intersecting mobilities that this phenomenon brings into view and tension. We cite evidence from focus groups, interviews and surveys of residents, elected community representatives, council staff, backpackers and backpacker industry representatives, conducted in partnership with six key LGAs in Sydney.

International backpackers are well known for their diverse and independent forms of travel, and their tendency to cross many boundaries in their desire to be on or off the beaten track. However, the mobilities of contemporary backpackers blur as many conceptual and metaphorical boundaries as they do physical ones. Backpackers obviously travel for leisure and pleasure. But they also increasingly travel and work and study. For example, many backpackers apply for Working Holiday Maker visas that allow them to combine periods of work with their travels. The phenomenon of ‘student backpackers’ also adds to the changing nature of both ‘backpacking’ and the slippery nature of the traditional difference between work and leisure. The concept of a ‘working holiday’ disputes the large body of literature that positions tourism in opposition to work. Many young travellers are also variously combining extended holidays with ‘study abroad’ and student exchange schemes. Through such programs, backpackers often end up combining long periods of travelling through places with long periods of dwelling in place. Global travellers, it seems, no longer just simply ‘travel’ (if ever they did), but they also frequently work, study, reside in local communities, and for some periods of time at least, often adopt the regular routines of other more permanent locals and residents. These mutating styles of mobility challenge both tourism theory and the practice of managing the places they ‘visit’.

Once considered part of the extreme low-end of the tourist economy - alternative ‘free-loaders’ yielding few economic returns - backpackers have now become highly sought-after targets for a range of sectors: education, nursing, agriculture, a host of primary industries such as fishing, pearling and harvesting, and the ‘hospitality’ sector of the tourism industry itself, which relies so heavily on casual and seasonal employees willing to work late nights and weekends. It is for this reason that some
scholars have commented that few modern social developments are more significant and yet less appreciated than the emergence of the backpacker travel industry (see Jarvis & Peel, 2005). The flexible itinerary, extended stay and combination of diverse activities (holiday, work, study) have all become characteristics of what defines (or makes definition difficult) of a backpacker today. But it is precisely these features, especially the connection to specific places and destinations for extended periods, that positions these travellers differently in relation to conventional forms of mobility - as a dwelling mutation. Inhabiting a space somewhere between short-term tourists and long-term immigrants, backpackers exist in a newly defined globalised world where categories of movement dissolve into one another, and where circulation rather than permanence has become the dominant paradigm of global migration.

These new developments significantly destabilise the usual typologies associated with travel and tourism. As a consequence, they also demand a reappraisal and reassessment of our conventional understandings of mobility (see also Silvey & Lawson, 1999; Hannam, Sheller & Urry, 2006). While many recent studies of transnational mobility have tended to focus specifically on the political economy of migration (Khoo et al., 2003) or on either end of the labour market (transnational elites or ‘developing world’ guest workers) (Pe-Pau et al., 1996; Inglis & Chung-Tong, 1992), or on contemporary tourism dynamics (Inglis, 2000; Lofgren, 1999; Gogia, 2006), few have attempted to undertake analyses which elicit all of these dimensions and indeed cross the boundaries of many more. By concentrating exclusively on singular instances or examples of mobility, many of these studies have also tended to downplay the connections and relationships between mobile forms and groups. They have also neglected the more mundane, everyday practices of transnationalism or what Conradson & Latham (2005) have termed the ‘middling’ forms of movement and transnational mobility (see also Clarke, 2005).

Yet different types and categories of travelling peoples routinely overlap, producing complex and at times indistinguishable forms of movement and stasis (see Lassen, 2006, on the intersection of work and tourist-related mobilities in the Danish organisation of Hewlett-Packard and the ‘knowledge industry’ more generally). For Urry, such ‘massive, hard-to-categorise, contemporary migrations, often with oscillatory flows between unexpected locations’ cannot be accounted for within any apparent state of equilibrium or in isolation, but must be understood as formations of global complexity with new relations and combinations of anchorage/permanence and movement/mobility (2003. p. 62).

Here, then, we would like to explore the activities and practices of a group of travellers (backpackers) as a way of illuminating connections with other mobilities, as well as the contexts in which they are formed and in turn transform and affect. We follow the suggestion, that rather than take tourism as the singular point of departure, perhaps it would be better to view tourism as one particular manifestation of wider social, economic and cultural phenomena (Meethan, 2003). In this way, we see ourselves as responding seriously to Franklin & Crang’s (2001, pp. 11-12) call for a ‘wider sociology and geography of tourism’ that searches ‘for links with other mobilities such as commuting, mobile labour markets, migration and Diasporas’. In this expanded field of mobilities, travel is thought to produce differently linked subjects, including backpackers, domestic workers in transit, academic conference-goers, asylum seekers, smuggled people and many others. This is not, as Kaplan
(2003, p. 220) explains, to suggest that refugees are identical or even similar subjects as sex workers, not to mention monied tourists. But it is to theorise travel ‘as a Foucauldian field with diverse points in tension with one another or even as a continuum with a point of origin and discrete itinerary of sites, rather than the older binary format of “this” or “that”’.

**Governing the Mobile**

The immense scale and velocity of contemporary forms of travel have, of course, been noted by many commentators. Although usually grouped together under the one keyword ‘globalisation’, what we are actually dealing with here is an extraordinary array of disparate processes that are simultaneously redrawing the contours of contemporary social experience. For Appadurai, what is significant about the contemporary, as distinct from colonial, formations out of which globalisation is produced and figured, is the ‘sheer speed, scale and volume’ of global flows: People, machinery, money, images, and ideas follow increasingly nonisomorphic paths; of course, at all periods in human history, there have been some disjuncture in the flow of these things, but the sheer speed, scale and volume of each of these flows are now so great that the disjunctures have become central to the politics of global culture. (1996, p. 37)

Similarly, for Urry, the various global networks and flows that are now a part, and indeed constitutive, of everyday life necessitate new conceptual tools and methods. He suggests that the diverse, multiple transformations associated with the movement of things, information, images and of course people are ‘materially reconstructing the “social as society” into the “social as mobility”’ (Urry, 2000, p. 2). And, for Urry, one of the most important questions thrown up by this landscape of complex interdependencies is to consider how and to what degree ‘social governmentality’ is called into question by mobilities organised through complexly organised times and spaces (2000, p. 2).

Historically, systems and forms of government were developed to administer and provide services for fixed rather than mobile populations. As Foucault’s (1977) work demonstrates, time and space were integral to the rise of this ‘art of government’. Both became central to the organisation of the city and the construction of a collective infrastructure that enabled the processes of governmental rationality to develop and expand. In this way, systems of governance actually proceeded from the control of space and the standardisation of actions over time, and required, primarily, the organisation of individuals in space, and the specific enclosure of that space. The government of societies was conceived, to a great extent, as a way of controlling and disciplining aberrant ‘mobile and nomadic subjects and groups’ (Rabinow, 1984, p. 17), and it developed accordingly as a system designed to ensure the maintenance and care of the fixed and enclosed population that became the very object of governmentality.

In the contemporary context, where mobility is a defining feature of the reconstitution of social life, new forms of ‘mobility management’ (Kesselring, 2006) emerge, with individuals and institutions variously adapting to the imperatives of the ‘networked societies’ that Castells (1996) prefigured some years ago. ‘Border protection’, for example, has been vigorously embraced by many nations and states in an attempt to
manage and control the escalation in various kinds of border crossings around the world. This new regime of ‘mobility management’ can be usefully considered in reference to the current Australian context. Today, the Department of Immigration and Citizenship is the Australian government department responsible not only for ‘border protection’ in general, but also immigration policy and the granting of visas for tourists, migrants, working holidaymakers, and refugees alike. It is this government department that has determined, for example, the policies relating to ‘excised off-shore places’ in which refugee and asylum laws do not apply. Yet, as we shall see in the following section, it is also the Department of Immigration that recently announced the liberalisation of the Working Holiday Maker Program and the increased access of young internationals to Australian labour markets. This example illustrates strikingly the uneven distribution of mobility throughout contemporary space, the intense stratification of access to world economies and the new ‘dialectic of borders’ that accompanies this differentiated access.

**Backpackers as Workers: Changes to Australia’s Working Holiday Maker Scheme**

If international backpacking connotes a lifestyle of leisure - ‘ego’-tourism as opposed to ‘eco’-tourism in the words of one rather shrill characterisation (Mowforth & Munt, 1998, p. 149) - it is the increasingly formalised integration of ‘labour’ into the backpacking experience that marks one of its more intriguing contemporary dimensions. The plural positionings and subjectivities of the contemporary backpacker are to a large extent produced and changed by government-sponsored policies. In Australia, where our work is situated, the present Federal Government has not only extended the Working Holiday Maker Scheme to include more countries (see below), it has also liberalised the regulations governing ‘working holidaymaker’ (WHM) visas. Now, WHMs can remain in the same job for twice as long - six months rather than three months - and can stay for two years rather than the one year covered by previous visa restrictions. The (former) Minister for Immigration, Amanda Vanstone, also extended the type of work WHMs can undertake: in addition to fruit picking, they can now work in primary industries as diverse as harvesting, fishing, pearling, shearing, butchery and forestry.

In short, working holidaymakers can apply for a second WHM visa if they spend three months employed in Australia’s primary industries. They are also encouraged to find work in the tourism industry, which is itself a big employer of backpackers and other working holidaymakers (DIMA, 2006a). The idea, it seems, is to encourage backpackers whose first point of entry to Australia is often a capital city (typically Sydney, which is Australia’s key gateway city for international travellers) to enlarge their sphere of travel and take up work in a regional area. In the short time these policy shifts have been in place, some 1,500 WHMs have used the mechanism to extend their stay in Australia, and many more are expected to apply. A significant number, if not the majority, of the interviewed backpackers in the above-mentioned ongoing research project, entered Australia on this scheme, often attracted to Sydney by the prospect of work, as well as the reputed and promoted beach culture and night life on offer. As the Research Manager at the City of Sydney Council stated in interview, backpackers need to be recognised not only as consumers of services, but as ‘suppliers of labour for a whole stack of activities that are needed in the City for its global status’ (Backpacker Operators Focus Group, 12 May 2006).
Many of the policy initiatives are the result of intense lobbying by rural employers who are experiencing extreme labour shortages. When announcing the changes to the scheme, the Immigration Minister summed up why working backpackers are now such a boon to the agricultural industry: ‘Growers tell me that working holiday-makers are amongst their most valuable workers because of their enthusiasm and mobility’ (quoted in Murphy, 2006, p. 28). One rural recruitment agency confirmed this image: ‘If Australians were available, of course property owners would put them on. But backpackers are here, they’re looking for work, they’re super enthusiastic’ (quoted in Murphy, 2006). In Cairns, one of the largest backpacker destinations in Australia, the Minister noted that:

Local primary producers constantly need their help with seasonal work. The Far North Queensland tropical fruits industry is worth about $350 million annually, the sugar cane industry about $300 million a-year, livestock production about $190 million annually and field crops, including potatoes, watermelons and pumpkins, about $100 million annually. Cairns has one of the largest fishing fleets in Australia. The annual fishing and aquaculture industry is worth about $200 million annually. (DIMA, 2006b)

The Australian trade union movement, however, is less than enthusiastic about the use of backpackers as a source of cheap labour, and sees the liberalisation of working visa conditions as leading to a displacement of Australian workers and a distortion of the labour market. As the National Secretary of the Australian Workers Union, Bill Shorten, put it: ‘All this is going to do is drive down wages. It’s nothing short of the “Mexicanisation” of Australia’s country workers’ (quoted in Murphy, 2006, p. 28; see also Kinnaird, 1999). Yet many businesses in Sydney contend that backpackers are already ‘Australia’s Mexicans’ and that without them many local businesses could not function or survive, especially given the financial pressures of a deregulated and competitive international economy (Waverley Chamber of Commerce Focus Group, 14 December 2006).

For some commentators, though, the new visa conditions are evidence of wider changes across the whole industry. Peter Mares, for example, suggests that the decision to extend the visa is proof that the scheme has shifted from providing a ‘lifestyle experience’ for young travellers and is now a labour market program (Murphy, 2006, p. 28). In this way, the profitable, lucrative mobilities of backpackers - many of whom just happen to be in the right place at the right time - are intersecting with other mobilities that are not so advantageous, and which are, in effect, directly detrimental to many communities and industries. Rural and regional communities in particular are suffering the exodus of people from country towns - the so-called ‘flight from the bush’ - and the subsequent labour shortages. A number of factors are influencing the mobilities of rural workers, including the greater employment opportunities in urban centres and cities, the decline of family farming, an ageing population, and the subsequent reduction of many regional industries in these areas.

Labour shortages, however, especially in rural areas, are nothing new. Historically, governments and lobby groups around the world have improvised with different ways of recruiting workers. In Australia in the 19th century, for example, sugar cane growers successfully lobbied for the recruitment - both voluntary and involuntary - of Pacific and South Sea Islanders to work in the emerging sugar cane industry of North
Queensland. While many were recruited willingly, others were coerced, forced and literally ‘press-ganged’ to come to Australia as indentured labourers (see Castles et al., 1992). Around 1901, at the time of Federation and the White Australia policy, white supremacists demanded the expulsion of all ‘non-white’ workers, and most of the ‘Kanakas’, as these Islanders were often called, were deported. The Australian government then looked elsewhere for ‘guest workers’, recruiting sugar cane cutters from Italy, and then finally implementing the post-World War II large-scale immigration program.

At the 2005 Pacific Island Forum a number of Pacific nations, many of which are suffering from failing economies and high levels of unemployment, proposed a seasonal work program scheme that would involve sending seasonal workers to Australia. The horticultural and other intensive agriculture industries have supported the proposal, but the Australian Government has so far displayed a reluctance to endorse the use of labour from Pacific countries for seasonal employment. In the meantime, backpackers have become a valuable source of cheap labour. Indeed, as one journalist put it, ‘the backpacker is the new Kanaka’ (Murphy, 2006, p. 28).

The mobilities of the contemporary world, then, including those associated with backpacking, continue to be framed by longstanding discursive regimes of race and colonial capitalism. As one Australian businessman put it, ‘My business couldn’t work without people coming from overseas. We have a pressing need for lots more people. It’s so urgent I can’t tell you. But Australia needs to keep a balance between those born here and immigrants’ (quoted in Murphy, 2006, p. 28). Thus far Australia has a WHM agreement with as many as 19 countries. They are (and to provide a sense of the racialised selectivity of source countries): UK, Canada, the Netherlands, the Republic of Ireland, Japan, Korea, Malta, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Finland, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Cyprus, Italy, Belgium, France, Estonia and Thailand. US citizens can apply for four-month working holiday visas under a new trial. When the government announced the expansion of the WHM program, a number of characteristics associated with backpackers were given particular emphasis: mobility, youth, adventurousness and a willingness to take on the experiences and challenges of working on farms and other seasonal work. One government official also stated that: ‘WHMs are from low-immigration risk countries and are as a result less at risk from exploitation’ (quoted in Murphy, 2006, p. 28). In this thinly veiled official rationale for recruiting backpackers over ‘immigrants’, the acute tensions between capital accumulation needs and race-based selectivity within the evolving WHM agenda, are exposed.

**Backpackers as Students and Volunteers**

It is not uncommon for backpackers to Australia to combine stints of itinerant travel with not only periods of work but also study. In the ongoing research into such visitors to Sydney, it is interesting to observe a number of interviewed backpackers who chose to base themselves in Sydney as a launching post to short-term jobs that would fund periods of both travel and study. Here again, some recent state-sponsored initiatives mark out the dextrous flexibilities and de-regulatory impulses of a globalising labour market and dynamic mobilities. In addition to changes to the WHM scheme that enable holders to study in Australia for four months (instead of the current three months), overseas students graduating with tertiary degrees can now hold 18-month
work visas in Australia. And while some such students doubtless join the professions and trades, it is clear that others ‘take to the road’ where they combine touring with seasonal labour jobs of the kind discussed above.

Indeed it is precisely such initiatives that enable the multiple motivated journeying into which ‘backpacking’ is increasingly folded. At the first ‘Australia Needs Skills Expo’, held in Adelaide in 2006 (and modelled on precedents held in India, the UK, and elsewhere in Europe), Australia’s then Immigration and Multiculturalism Affairs Minister Amanda Vanstone noted the employment openings in regional communities (especially in Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia) that would be attractive to various cohorts of ‘temporary resident’. This increasingly loose designation includes overseas students, working holidaymakers, backpackers, and other independent travellers (DIMA, 2006c).

Overseas students who have gained Australian tertiary degrees, diplomas or trade qualifications can now also apply for permanent skilled worker visas and extend their stay relatively easily. The sense in which the government is relinquishing concern about a line between temporary and permanent (at least for certain categories of incomers), is conveyed in its recent claim to be encouraging more people to experience Australia initially on a temporary basis and then ‘creating pathways to help migrants move easily from temporary to permanent migration’ (DIMA, 2006d). The recent introduction, too, of e-visas in which tourist visa applications can be lodged online is another instance of the liberalising mechanisms that underpin the mutant mobilities of interest to this essay, of which backpackers/students/working holidaymakers are an important cohort. Some backpackers to Australia also double as ‘volunteer tourists’ in a niche of the tourism industry that is increasingly geared at supplying ‘experiences’ in a varied range of organisations. These include charity, aid, organic farming, sustainable tourism, environmental and conservation to name a few such organisations. ‘Volunteer’ travellers join other independent sojourners (such as those on gap years, career breaks and early retirement) in seeking activities that ‘make a difference’, facilitate more ‘authentic’ contact with residents and places, and generally enhance the ‘self-realisation’ potential of their travels. Here, they are of interest in suggesting once again the sense in which the category of ‘backpacker’, which by definition refers to a mobile group, though much less so than the mainstream tourist, does itself circulate across a web of domains and spaces of economic and social life. The ‘volunteering’ subgenre of backpacker, in his/her determination to learn, engage, and (certainly) not alienate local populations, also provides an intriguing counterpoint into the discussion on responses to backpackers (in Sydney) that follows.

**Urban Backpackers: the Problem of the Roving (or Rogue) Resident**

If, in a conceptual sense, backpackers are a subset of sojourners who increasingly defy easy or even any delimitation, what happens in a material and corporeal sense when they come into encounter with the (often deeply felt) fixities of place and community? What happens at the interface of itinerancy and rootedness? Of course in any globalising urban setting today, the so-called ‘hosts’ of place and community are themselves as likely to be short-term as permanent residents, transients too at some level in the sense of not being bound to one particular place. Like the opposition of settler and migrant, that of visitor and host is another of the numerous polarities that
come unstuck when considered through the lens of the ‘new mobilities paradigm’ (Sheller & Urry, 2006). Thus, what is of interest here is the question of accommodating this class of ‘global nomad’ (Richards & Wilson, 2004) within the urban setting.

Backpackers are inhabitants who cannot be pinned down conceptually, practically, legally to the familiar categories not only of ‘owner’ and ‘tenant’, but also ‘visitor’, ‘tourist’ and even ‘low-income lodger’. In their more or less semi-permanence, backpacker oscillations among and across tenures and premises from ‘rental homes’, to ‘apartments’, ‘units’, ‘flats,’ ‘hotels’, ‘hostels’, ‘boarding houses’, ‘shelters’ and so on, trouble existing provisions for, and interpretations of, property use rights. In straddling a range of categorisations, backpackers expose the tensions within an ‘urban dwelling’ paradigm whose narrative infrastructure has long since been built around the taken-for-granted opposition of settler and nomad. So too, as shall be seen in what follows, do the embodied proximities of variously fixed city-dwellers test the practical limits of local efforts to ‘accommodate’ these intriguingly slippery urban subjects.

Note here that we are not meaning backpackers to stand in for the romanticised, unfettered mobile subject of the contemporary age - a figure often called up to evoke the rhizomatic, nomadic and creative potential of the world (for a critique in the context of the mobilities literature, see Kaplan, 2006; in a different context, see Saldhana, 2006, for a figuration of a world of ‘viscosity’ that is neither fluid nor solid). In the urban context, the issue of the backpacker is that s/he stays (as well as goes), for periods of time that are variable and (often purposefully) unpredictable, and in urban spaces that often lie beyond the hotel strips and tourist precincts of other more fleeting (inter)national visitors. S/he inhabits an unstable space ‘in between’ coming and going, ‘in between’ citizen and transient. As such s/he deranges the settled coordinates of the zoned and ordered city mentioned earlier in relation to the problem of governance and ‘mobility management’.

Indeed, most of the backpackers interviewed for this research indicated a preference for shared rental accommodation over conventional backpacker hostel-style accommodation. Only one week after his arrival in Sydney, one interviewed French backpacker, for example, had already made the decision to move from a backpacker’s hostel into rental accommodation with friends. This particular backpacker who was travelling on a WHM visa had also found a job in a restaurant in the tourist precinct of Circular Quay and was getting ready to make himself ‘feel at home’ in Manly. As he explained: ‘I want to feel at home here. I want to experience the Australian way of life… I want to live and work as if I am at home’ (interview, 15 November 2006).

Home/Abroad: The Politics of Occupancy in Sydney

For the backpackers themselves, the categories and definitions associated with ‘travelling’, ‘holiday’, ‘working’ and ‘residing’, ‘home’ and ‘abroad’ are extremely fluid and unstable and, as such, offer a fairly accurate reflection of the flexibility of their lives and itineraries. Many backpackers, for example, do not see their experiences as fitting within the margins of current definitions of travel and travellers within tourism research and bureaucracies, while others reject the term ‘backpacker’ as derogatory and outdated. One young English backpacker, Lauren, chose to describe herself as an ‘independent traveller’ rather than a backpacker, explaining that her one-
year working holiday visa and use of rental accommodation meant that she was living and working in the same place for an extended period of time and therefore had a temporary long-term residential experience that could not be accounted for within the usual definition of a backpacker:

Because I’ve only been living in a hostel while I’ve been here [in Manly], for about four weeks, but before we were living in a unit for five months and we were working full-time jobs, so I didn’t really feel like a backpacker. I just felt like someone who was working abroad, do you know what I mean? (Lauren, Backpacker Focus Group, 16 June 2006).

Similarly, Jemma, a Scottish backpacker, also distinguished ‘backpacking’ from the working holiday:

Well, it was like, before we had the flat in Manly in summer, and I wouldn’t have classified myself as a backpacker then because we were all staying in a flat and working. Like Lauren said, it’s like being back home, working every day, going back to your flat. Not backpacking. (Backpacker Focus Group, 16 June 2006)

Both Jemma and Lauren indicated that when they were staying in hostel accommodation they were most likely to identify as ‘backpackers’. Yet at other times, for example when they were living in rental accommodation and following an everyday, familiar routine of staying in one place and going to work (just ‘like being back home’), they were more inclined to identify as ‘travellers’ or simply ‘working abroad’. In this sense, the very category of the ‘backpacker’ is fluid and unstable and, mirroring the actual movements of the backpackers themselves, becomes a category that is highly mobile itself, and often only ever temporarily or provisionally occupied or adopted. The category of ‘backpacker’ is just one of many identities that may be taken up or identified with during the period of visitation. It exists as one point along a continuum of other multiple identities that are potentially available, and which are constantly changing, from being highly mobile and travelling around and seeing places to residing or ‘dwelling’ in a place for long periods ‘like back home’.

Yet for many other groups, including the business community that frequently employs backpackers, permanent residents, and for many backpackers themselves, combining travel and work is the very essence of what it means to be a backpacker. It is for this reason that the categories of the ‘working holidaymaker’ and ‘backpacker’ are virtually synonymous, and to a great extent are now used interchangeably. This often means that rather than a linear sequence of experiences and identities that correspond to the linear nature of the trip or journey as a series of stages (as described above), the backpacker frequently occupies, simultaneously, a range of identities and positions at the one time. So, a backpacker may be a student and working and travelling and holidaying and living a day-to-day existence in a house, flat or apartment that appears to differ very little from the lives and identities of other more permanent residents. Indeed, many share accommodation with Australian residents who themselves may be temporarily residing in Sydney (away from home) as students.

It is this semi-permanent or temporary long-term character of contemporary backpacking that has also not only led to the perceived benefits of backpacker tourism but also to the perceived costs. The unique combination of the extended stay and working holiday visa means that backpackers can be employed for substantial periods, and the economic benefits and contributions of such travellers to a number of sectors within the overall Australian economy are frequently cited (for example, City of
Sydney Chamber of Commerce; Waverley Chamber of Commerce). Yet it is these same factors (long stay; work/residential combination) that have directly contributed to social tensions in many suburbs, and which are identified as contributing not benefits but losses, particularly to amenity, to many local communities. In breaking down or complicating the conventional distinctions between work and leisure (see also Thrane, 2000), and between home and elsewhere, the working holiday phenomenon not only disrupts many of the assumptions about communities and places, locals and visitors, but also many of the preconceptions upon which much tourism and travel theory is based. The blurring of international backpacker and Australian student into ‘temporary resident’ who operates in a different time and social space to more permanent or older residents adds additional complexity to the delineation and categorisation of subsectors of mobile communities. Intergenerational tension can be exactly the same as the ‘local’-‘visitor’ tension; however, the ‘anti-social’ behaviour in these tourist locations is most frequently (conveniently) attributed to the ‘other’.

Travel has long been seen as necessarily entailing experiences that are different to or opposed to those which constitute ‘home’ and everyday life. For Lofgren, for example, the holiday involves accessing territories of freedom from work, regulations and the routines of everyday life (1999). Similarly for Urry (1990) travel is an opportunity to consume experiences which are different from those typically encountered in everyday life. Both have conventionally been constructed as experiences which are freed from the demands of daily life, and when ‘everyday obligations are suspended or inverted’ (Urry, 2002, p. 14). Yet for many of the backpackers spoken to for this project, the appeal of working holiday backpacking is precisely the opportunities it provides to have the ‘authentic’ experience of staying and working for long periods of time in residential communities, and to live, so to speak, not as tourists, but as locals. In this way, they often live in a house in a suburb, they go to work, they drink at the pub - a prosaic procession of activities not all that different from the life they left behind at home. In this version of ‘ordinary life’ (which tourism has conventionally been defined against) the usual oppositions between the touristic and the everyday, home and elsewhere and so on, are casually unsettled. The working holiday, therefore, may at some time provide territories of freedom and periods of leisure, but its defining feature is that it more often than not becomes a relocation of familiar work routines, regulations and social relations in new places and contexts. As Ateljevic & Doorne (2004, p. 76) contend, ‘the relationship between work and leisure, particularly with respect to working holidays, is a rapidly changing element of the backpacking phenomenon'.

For many social and community planners working within local government this means that backpackers must be recognised not only as the suppliers of labour and services but also as the users and consumers of local activities and amenities. In the words of Annette Trubenach, a Social and Community Planner at Waverley Council – the LGA which includes the popular and iconic tourist destination Bondi Beach and which has become a de facto home for many backpackers - tourists such as backpackers are 'part of the local community and they're part of the local fabric, and especially so if they're staying for six months or a year' and, consequently, this requires a recognition of the services and amenities they require (interview, 14 August 2006). For Trubenach, the phenomenon of the 'resident backpacker/traveller' necessarily demands a reconceptualisation of 'local community' and a rethinking of the distinction between the local and the non-local, or the resident and the visitor: 'people [are] coming from
all over the place to work, to live...I think that because of that, yes, perhaps that distinction is slowly falling away. What is a tourist these days? It's impossible to say!' Moreover, for Waverley Council, backpackers provide a 'local pool of potential employees' for essential local services such as child- care and health-care that are currently suffering from serious staff shortages, and therefore should not just be seen as simply impacting on local amenities and services, or as a cost to communities, but as resources for their viability and continuation.

Yet, at the same time, from the point of view of many permanent residents, backpackers may be working and contributing to the economy, but they are still living the life of an itinerant, which while it may be physically located within a local community, has no actual allegiance to or investment in that particular community. There is a suspension of the standard controls, constraints and regulations that define 'settled' and 'proper' community. In residential areas hosting large numbers of tourists, for example, many residents complain about the particular adverse impacts associated with backpackers - noise, late-night parties, dumped furniture and rubbish, drunkenness, abandoned cars, and anti-social behaviour - and the fact that they are behaving completely differently to the way they would 'at home'. Yet, in these same suburbs, it is the location of late-night and even 24-hour trading hotels and consequent excessive alcohol consumption that fuels much of this behaviour: businesses owned, operated and frequented by local people. The impact of increasing alcohol consumption by youth is a topical issue in Sydney which falls to local government to manage.

As mentioned earlier, another particular concern for both residents and local authorities are the large numbers of backpackers moving into boarding houses and rental accommodation. Although there are also a host of related reasons that have led backpackers into the rental market, one trend identified by all stakeholders involved in this research is that backpackers are staying for longer periods and need an alternative to the short-stay lodging provided by most hostel-style accommodation. At present, most backpacker hostels in Sydney can accommodate backpackers for a maximum of 28 days. For both the tourism sector and local authorities this is the accepted definition of a 'short-term stay', a definition reinforced by legislation such as the Public Health Act that governs appropriate room size for length of stay. Periods longer than 28 days are considered a more permanent length of stay and, legally, are not permissible in most backpacker hostels, which have limited room sizes and amenities.

When these limitations are considered in relation to issues such as cost and affordability, and the recent changes to the working holiday program, together with the need for a sense of space, privacy and looking for a 'home away from home', it is easy to see the attraction of the medium- to long-term accommodation available through the rental market. For the operators of hostels, though, this is a trend that is viewed with some resignation but much anger and alarm, as they watch their customers and business (and other items) slipping away:

A lot move into apartments. They'll stay with me for 30 days and then by then they'll found enough people to go in with, get their bond and then they'll clean me out of plates and cups and pillows and go into their apartment. (Manager, Surfside Hostels, Backpacker Operators Focus Group, 12 May 2006)
Consequently, in much rental accommodation used by backpackers, three-month minimum leases are frequently common and, indeed, have become recognised as the appropriate lease for more permanent stays. Yet for many Sydney residents the new phenomenon of acceptable three-month leases has actually added to rather than provided a solution to the 'problem of transience'. In Vicar Street, Coogee, for example, a conflict between local authorities, residents, police and rental property owners has become both particularly intense and intractable. Because of its close proximity to Coogee Beach, Vicar Street is a favourite address for backpackers, in particular two older-style apartment blocks containing 26 fully-furnished apartments. Both two- and three-bedroom apartments are available, and all tenants are placed on three-month minimum leases. The accommodation is targeted specifically at backpackers through advertisements in British Balls Magazine, known as the 'leading backpacker magazine in Australia', and the owner accepts cash-only payment of rent. Yet for the 45 residents in the Coogee area who in 2006 signed a 'Petition Against Noise Pollution' that was subsequently sent to the local Randwick council, the concentration of backpackers in such unsupervised residential living conditions, and the high turnover of travellers using the premises, creates a 'backpacker ghetto' that is incompatible with the kind of residential community these residents want.

For many of these concerned residents, Vicar Street is simply yet another of the so-called 'illegal' and 'unauthorised' backpacker accommodation sites that have become an increasing problem for local authorities across Sydney's coastal suburbs. In these instances, a residential premise is often used without proper authorisation for a commercial use (i.e. as a backpackers' hostel) and a council can effectively call for it to cease operation. In recent years, for example, Waverley Council has investigated one case where nine backpackers were living in a one-bedroom unit, and another where 32 backpackers were found to be living in one house. Yet in Vicar Street, the properties in question are located in a commercially zoned area, the apartments are not operating commercially as a de facto backpackers' hostel but rather as legitimate residential accommodation available to tenants on three-month leases, and therefore they comply with all regulatory requirements. So, while 'locals' continue to point to the problems associated with the transient/semi-permanent mobilities of such travellers, from the perspective of the authorities these visitors are signed to Residential Tenancy Agreements for medium- to long-term stays (three to 12 months) and are, in effect, 'residents'. In essence, from a council point of view, it is increasingly difficult, if not impossible, to discern exactly to which category - traveller or resident - this mobile group belongs: 'sure, they're backpackers, they're travellers, but they're there for three months, they're not coming and going, they're like residents' (Senior Manager, Building and Compliance, Randwick Council, personal communication, 28 November 2006).

The confusion over how to define this fluid group of travellers remains a constant problem for local authorities, especially those seeking to ensure compliance with planning codes and regulations. As Mark Featherstone, Coordinator of Building Regulations and Compliance, Waverley Council, explains: I think they think they're here for a party, they're here for a good time, they're here on holidays. But some of them are on working visas. So the people who are in here - are they a backpacker or are they not? I suppose they are really, but they're not because they're here for more than three months. They're here for six months. They're like
anyone else renting a place and they're just having parties. (interview, 20 August 2006)

In practical terms this is where the problems begin for local governance in the Australian and Sydney case. Local government authorities, developed to administer and provide services for fixed rather than mobile populations, are currently operating with planning codes and legislation that are increasingly ineffective and inappropriate for such mobile groups and contexts. Elsewhere, in some European cities, this inflexibility presents itself in relation to increasingly fluid student populations, suggesting the sense in which the urban backpacking phenomenon (of interest to this essay) needs to be considered within the context of a rise in youth mobility more generally (see Van den Berg & Russo, 2003, on the problems of 'integration' in 'student cities' such as Rotterdam and Helsinki). Additionally, in the Sydney case, the local communities favoured by backpackers are comprised of highly mobile 'locals' and 'non-locals', including permanent residents who are themselves living, working and travelling in a style that is increasingly defined by transience, impermanence and mobility. Both groups, therefore, are living and passing through localities that are themselves geared towards the attraction of transient tourists. Moreover, backpackers who are living in LGAs for relatively long periods sometimes stay even longer than so-called 'local' residents: 'Given the transience of city residents, many backpackers are actually here longer than some city residents are' (Senior Research Manager, City of Sydney). In the Bondi/Waverley area the overall transience and mobility of the community in general have also been noted: 'I spend a fair amount of time trying to talk to neighbours, and they're changing as often as we're changing. It's Bondi' (Backpacker Hostel Operator, Surfside Hostels).

When mobility as much as permanence comes to characterise the social formation all the usual distinctions - who is 'a tourist' and who is 'a local', 'guest', 'host', 'visitor', 'resident' and 'local community' etc. - become increasingly hard to sustain. When asked to account for the backpacker who not only travels but also stays, one operator of a backpackers' hostel summed it up this way: 'But then you've got to classify your definition of a backpacker, and that's like asking how long is a piece of string, you know?'

Conclusion
In this essay we have shown how the 'mutant mobilities' elicited by the backpacking phenomenon circulate through the urban property market, bumping into the (increasingly flawed) regulations installed to delimit permanents and transients. The semi-permanent who stays too long to be simply a short-term tourist but not long enough to establish a residential existence that conforms to, or is integrated within, the spatial and temporal rhythms of the settled place is a troubling figure, disrupting the usual coordinates and logics of governance and community. Yet such conflicts over the 'management' of mobility, and mobile groups more generally, only look likely to continue. In Australia the number of overseas visitors entering on a temporary long-term basis (classified as up to one year) has exceeded the number of people arriving for permanent settlement (Khoo et al., 2003). In the context of such temporary migration patterns, and escalating and intensifying mobility more generally, new juxtapositions of unintended and often unwanted co-presence and proximity will
continue to create challenges for urban governance and its coordination at municipal, state, regional and federal levels.

Backpackers are being recognised as constituting an important labour market for the kind of 'nomad capitalism' (Williams, 1989, p. 124) that goes hand-in-hand with a globalising, highly mobile world. But the mobilities of this physically as well as conceptually hard-to-pin down group involve complex dynamics of travelling and dwelling, movement and settlement that disrupt both the usual global visions of unfettered, unconstrained mobility and borderless flows and our conventional understandings of tourist culture. And, like all instances of mobility, a closer examination of the material settings and frameworks in which such dynamics take place reveals the much wider intersections of power and privilege, as well as the very real interfaces of social tension and conflict.

Acknowledgments

The authors wish to acknowledge the funding assistance of the Australia Research Council (Linkage Project) and the contributing partners: City of Sydney Council, Manly Council, North Sydney Council, Randwick City Council, Waverley Council, Woollahra Municipal Council.
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